

**REMARKS**

Allowance of all claims is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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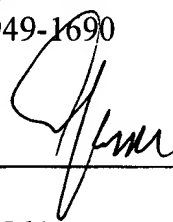
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MARKED-UP VERSION OF AMENDED CLAIMS 98-101

Technology Center 2600

98. (Amended) A synchronous digital hierarchy (SDH) network in which data is carried in a virtually concatenated information structure, the network comprising: tributary [cards] interfaces arranged and configured to process signals received in a contiguously concatenated form to convert them into a virtually concatenated form for transfer across the network.

99. (Amended) The network of claim 98, wherein the tributary [cards] interfaces are arranged and configured to process the signals transferred across the SDH network in the virtually concatenated form and to convert them into the contiguously concatenated form.

100. (Amended) The network of claim 99, wherein the signals in the virtually concatenated form comprise virtual containers (VC), and wherein the tributary [cards] interfaces comprise one or more buffers for aligning said VCs.

101. (Amended) The network of the claim 98, wherein the tributary [cards] interfaces are configured and arranged to detect the receipt of signals in the contiguously concatenated form by detecting a concatenation indication of the signals received.